Hamilton Field, Warehouse Type C
(Facility Nos. 309, 405)
2nd Street
Novato
Marin County
California

HABS No. CA-2398-AJ

HABS
CAL
21-NOVA,
1AJ-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California

HABs
CAL
21-NOVA,
1AJ-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HAMILTON FIELD
Warehouse Type C
(Facility Nos. 309, 405)

HABS No. CA-2398-AJ

Location: Hamilton Army Air Field
Novato, Marin County, California
Quartermasters' Salvage Building (Facility No. 309) (northwest side of 2nd Street near Hangar Avenue); Quartermaster's Maintenance Building (Facility No. 405) (southeast side of 2nd Street between Escolta and Hangar Avenues)

U.S.G.S.: Novato, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1954 (revised 1980)
Petaluma Point, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1959 (revised 1980)
UTM Coordinates: Zone 10; A: 542100/4213620; B: 544720/4212220; C: 542760/4210650; D: 541040/4212600

Present Owner: General Services Administration, Washington, D.C.

Present Occupant and Use: Vacant

Statement of Significance:

The buildings are significant as examples of the application of an important architectural trend (Spanish Colonial Revival) adapted to reflect California's mission heritage in a dramatic departure from traditional military architecture. The buildings were initially used by the Quartermaster Corps for Salvage and Maintenance and later became supply and equipment warehouses.

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-239B) for a comprehensive Statement of Significance and individual report HABS No. CA-239B-F for a condensed general Statement of Significance.

PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: The contract for these two buildings was awarded on November 8, 1933. Construction on the salvage warehouse and maintenence building wes completed on May 28, 1934 (Hamilton Fecility Cards 1933-1971).

2. Architect: Hamilton Field was designed under the guidance of Captain Howard B. Nurse, Construction Quartermaster. He was assisted by a corps of civilians headed by H. P. Spencer, Chief Architect, and F. W. Salfinger, Chief Engineer. Captain F. C. Petes and Lieutenant J. H. Veal of the Quartermaster's Corps were detailed to Marin County by the War Department to assist Nurse (*Novato Advance* May 28, 1932). Landscaping efforts were directed by C. C. Stevens, a local landscape engineer, using plantings chosen by Nurse and donated by Marin County citizens.

3. Original Owner: Hamilton Field is on land originally owned by private individuals and companies. In 1930, the California Packing Company sold 630 acres of land to Marin County to use to entice the Army to build on the site. An additional 161 acres were purchased from Dr. T. Peter and Julia Bodkin. These parcels were combined with other County-owned land, and in 1932 Marin County sold a 927-acre parcel of land to the Department of the Army for $1.00 for use by the Army Air Corps as an air field. In 1947 Hamilton Air Field was transferred to the newly-formed U. S. Air Force and renamed Hamilton Air Force Base. In 1974 the U. S. Congress declared the installation excess to military needs and closed the base (Maniery et al. 1993). The warehouses were transferred to General Services Administration in 1974 and are currently part of an excess property sale.

4. Builder, Contractor, Supplier: The warehouses were constructed by the San Francisco Construction Company for a total cost of $12,727.00 each.

5. Original Plans and Construction: Original plans for all permanent buildings were drawn on linen with black ink by Nurse's corps of architects. The originals have not been located, but copies of these plans for most permanent buildings (elevations, electrical, plumbing, floor plans) are filed at the National Archives, Pacific Division, in San Bruno, California. Facility cards for Nurse's buildings, including an original photograph taken at completion of construction and floor plans, are on file at the Novato History Museum, Hamilton Room, in Novato, CA.

6. Alterations/Additions: Facility No. 309 has had minimal modification. In 1941 the slab floor sunk and was repaired with mesh-reinforced concrete slab. A concrete-walled vault was added to the northeast corner of the interior in 1965 and two additional rooms were built

in the southwest corner in 1970 for use as offices. A storage/office area was added to the northwest corner of Facility No. 405 in 1960 and a sawdust collector was installed in 1945. Fluorescent tube lights have been installed in both warehouses.

B. Historical Context:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) and Section B in report HABS No. CA-2398-F.

PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: Nurse and his team of architects designed reinforced concrete buildings covered with white stucco and red tile roofs and other features such as arcades and ornamental door surrounds in a basic Spanish Colonial Revival style. This style was used by Captain Nurse at Randolph Field in Texas and by other Army architects at various bases (Fine and Remington 1972:48; Thomason and Associates 1993). Captain Nurse blended the standard Colonial Revival design with elements borrowed from Moorish, Spanish Churriguerresque, Mission, and Art Moderne styles, creating a unique Spanish Eclectic look.

Buildings in the industrial area are built of reinforced concrete on concrete piers and foundations; steel bars were used during construction in consideration of the seismic activity of the region. Even though industrial in function, these buildings have design elements consistent with the Spanish Eclectic theme of the base.

The primary method of construction for the administrative and industrial buildings was reinforced concrete covered with stucco exteriors and Mission tile roofs. Foundations of all buildings were constructed of concrete reinforced with steel bars in consideration of the seismic activity of the region. Buildings in the administration and industrial areas were built using concrete and wood piers for support in a response to their construction on reclaimed salt marsh.

2. Condition of fabric: Facility No. 309 is in fair condition with the exception of the roof. Shingles have fallen off the composition roof and the plywood subroof is exposed in places. Facility No. 405 is in similar condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: These two Quartermaster's buildings are one-story high, rectangular in shape, and measure 68 feet B inches by 123 feet 11 inches. Each front elevation consists of central segmented overhead warehouse doors flanked by industrial metal multi-pane sash windows beneath a stepped parapet roofline.

2. Foundation: The foundations are constructed of concrete and wood piles and beams below a three-feet four-inch reinforced concrete foundation.

3. Walls: The exterior walls consist of 10-inch thick poured-in-place concrete coated with cementitious stucco rendered with a smooth face. Exterior detailing consists of stepped-parapet rooflines, square pillars at each corner, and pilaster flanking the central entrances. The pillars and pilasters have recessed vertical panels in an Art Moderne style.

4. Structural systems, framing: The buildings are supported by 12-inch steel I columns. The roofs are supported by riveted steel trusses.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: The buildings are at grade level and have slightly inclined concrete ramps at each entrance.

6. Chimneys: Two metal capped ventilators are located on each roof and are original. In addition, pipe ventilators protrude from the roofline.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways/doors: Central doors, located on the front and rear elevetions of the buildings, are of the overhead segmented type, wood, with 1B recessed panels. They are opened with a track system. The original door in the rear of Building 405 was replaced in 1953 with an overhead central loading segmented metal door made by the Overhead Door Company of California. A hollow core wood pedestrian door is located on the south facade of Building 309 on the eest corner. Building 405 has two pedestrian doors on the east side. Both are solid-core wood with four lights over two recessed panels. They are located on either end of the building and flank the four window bays. There is also a three-panel solid-core wood door on the west side. Pedestrian doors have multi-pane transoms.

b. Windows/shutters: Metal industrial multi-pane sash windows flank the front and rear entry doors and are located along both sides of each building. Each side elevation has six sets of windows, consisting of sets of four nine-light sash. These windows generally are in the upper half of the walls, with the lower half concrete. Sets flanking side doors are in the lower portion of the walls, or alternate positions.

Building 405 has some windows in both upper and lower walls on side facades. This pattern is original to the building. Some windows have exterior metal security bars.

8. Roof:

a. Shape/covering: The roofs are front-gabled, low-pitched, and covered with composition shingles.

b. Cornice/eaves: A metal cornice accents the stepped parapet. Metal gutters are on the side facades. Each side contains two downspouts.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

a. First Floor: Originally both buildings consisted of one large room with a 22-by 20-foot office in one corner. Building 405 also had wire mesh partitions enclosing the shops and storage area. A vault, office, and storage room were added to the northeast and southwest corners of Building 309 and an office space was created in the northwest corner of Building 405.

2. Stairways: Building 405 has ramps leading down from the metal folding doors to the shop floor.

3. Flooring: The subflooring for the buildings is concrete slab, smooth finished. They were repaired with new six-inch thick concrete slabs, wire mesh reinforced, and expansion joints in 1945 due to settlement.

4. Wall/ceiling finish: The walls are concrete with gray or white paint over the original cream paint. The ceilings are open to the roof with exposed steel trusses. Wall and ceiling coverings in the storage/office area of Building 405 consist of vertical tongue and groove paneling. The vault walls in 309 are eight-inch thick reinforced concrete.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways/doors: Doors in the storage/office area of Building 405 are solid core wood with five recessed panels. The vault door in Building 309 is made of four-inch thick reinforced steel.

b. Windows: The windows in the interior addition of Building 405 ere wood six light sash.

6. Decorative features/trim: No significant decorative trim was noted in either building.

7. Hardware: The pedestrian door hardware consists of standard circular knob and lock set with half mortise door hinge. The overhead segmented doors ere operated on a track system.

8. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: New duct work, including exhaust pipes and an overhead collection system, was installed in Building 405 when the woodworking shop was located there in 1945. The original heating system consisted of overhead warm air gas heaters and wall-mounted gas steam radiators. Building 405 has a fan-driven air conditioning and heating unit mounted on ceiling trusses.

b. Lighting: Exterior wall-mounted metal hooded green enamel lights are over pedestrian doors. The interior of the warehouse has five rows of five, two-tube fluorescent lights with metal hoods suspended from the ceiling on cheins. A 220-volt box is inside each building and electric plate switches are on the walls.

c. Plumbing: A single latrine is located near the original offices and contain "Royal Sloan Company" flush-valve toilets with black plastic "Church" seats and "Standard" wall-mounted sinks. Building 405 has a second latrine, containing a "Standard" urinal. Water faucets are located on the exterior of each building.

9. Original furnishings: Wooden work tables with storage drawers are loceted in Building 405 and appear to date to the 1945 period when the building was converted to a woodworking shop. Equipment installed at that time and connected to a sawdust collector included a jig saw, planer (2), circular saw, shaper, and drill press all made by the Yates American Machinery Company, a De Walt Company saw, Crescent bendsew, and a J. A. Foy and Egan Company belt sander, punch, sharpener, bench grinder, and grind stone. Latrines have brass plated toilet paper holders with wood tubes.

D. Site:

1. General site orientation: The primary facade of Building 309 faces southeast, that of Building 405 northwest. Both front onto 2nd Street. The buildings are situated in the original Spanish Colonial Revival district of Hamilton Army Air Field on a flat site surrounded by rolling hills, fitting within a grid system edjacent to the flight field.

2. Historic landscape design: Captain Nurse's overall plan for base design included thoughtful use of rock walls, terracing, and plantings to create a visual effect that was continued, in a more limited fashion, during World War II. Rock terracing throughout the original base served to simultaneously separate individual residences while visuelly uniting various sections of the base into an overall city-like plan. They were built as pert

of the final phase of original post construction in 1935 (Hamilton Official Photographs 1934-1935). Foundation and accent plantings, tree-lined streets, and retention of natural oak groves and rolling hills complement the rock work.

The warehouses are located in the original Quartermaster's area of the air field within a complex of warehouses, industrial buildings, and asphalt parking lots. A spur of the main line Northern Pacific Railroad line trends behind Building 309. The industrial area of base was not landscaped and is barren of vegetation, with the exception of volunteer weeds and thistle.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural Drawings:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398). Copies of Nurse's plans for these warehouses are filed at the National Archives, Pacific Division, San Bruno, CA. and the Hamilton Room, Novato History Museum, Novato.

B. Historic Maps and Views:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HA8S No. CA-2398).

C. Interviews:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HA8S No. CA-2398).

D. Bibliography:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HA8S No. CA-2398).

E. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HA8S No. CA-2398).

Sources cited in this individual report are listed below.

Fine, Jesse, and Lenore Remington
1972 *Army Corps of Engineers: Construction in the U.S.* U.S. Army and World War II, Office of Military History.

Hamilton Facility Cards
1933-1971 Maintenance Cards for Base Facilities. On file, Hamilton Army Air Field Installation Office, Novato, and Hamilton Room, Novato History Museum, Novato.

Maniery, Mary L., Leslie R. Fryman, and Fred Hrusa
1993 *National Register of Historic Places Evaluation, Hamilton Army Air Field Historic District, Marin County, California.* Submitted to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District.

Thomason and Associates
1993 *Randolph Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.* Cultural Resource Survey, Final Report. Nashville, Tennessee. On file, State Office of Historic Preservation, Austin, Texas.

F. Supplemental Material:

Copies of representative floor plans of Facility Nos. 309, 405, dated in the 1930s and prepared by the Quartermaster's General Office are attached to this form. The line drawn sketches were drafted on site in 1994 by Keith Syda, scanned into a computer and drawn by Christopher MacDonald in 1995, and corrected and finalized by Claire Warshaw in 1996 (all PAR Environmental Services, Inc. staff).

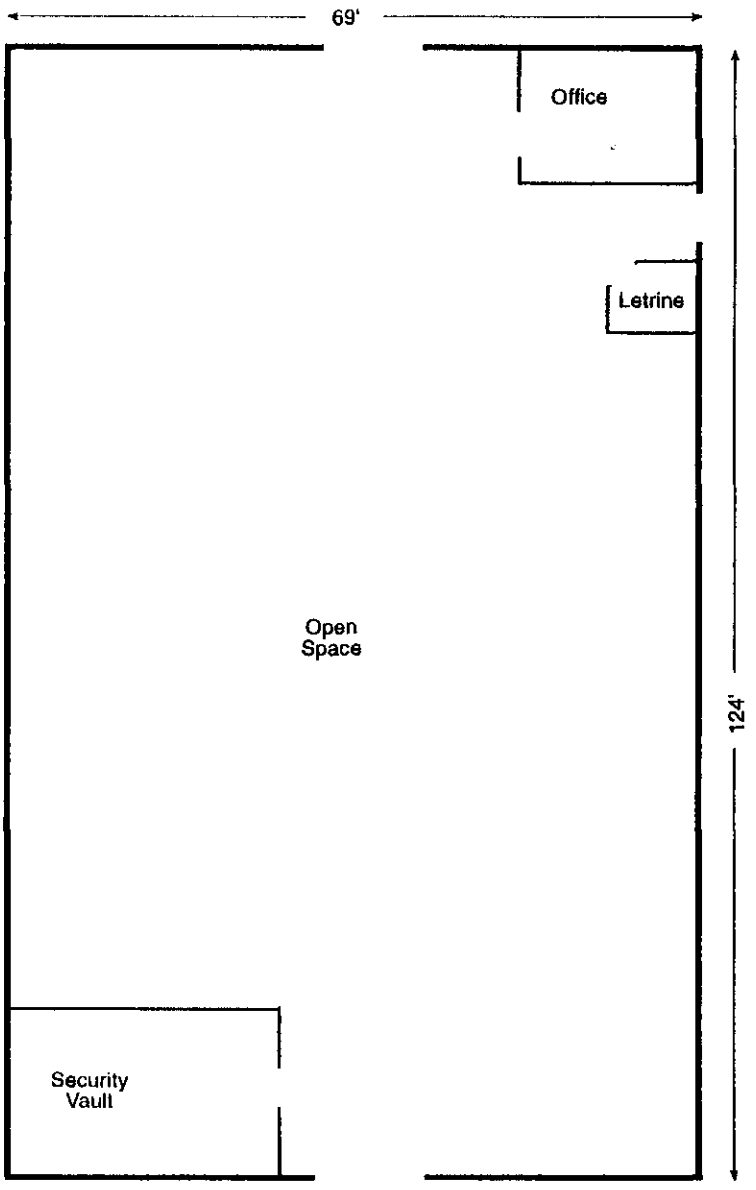
PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

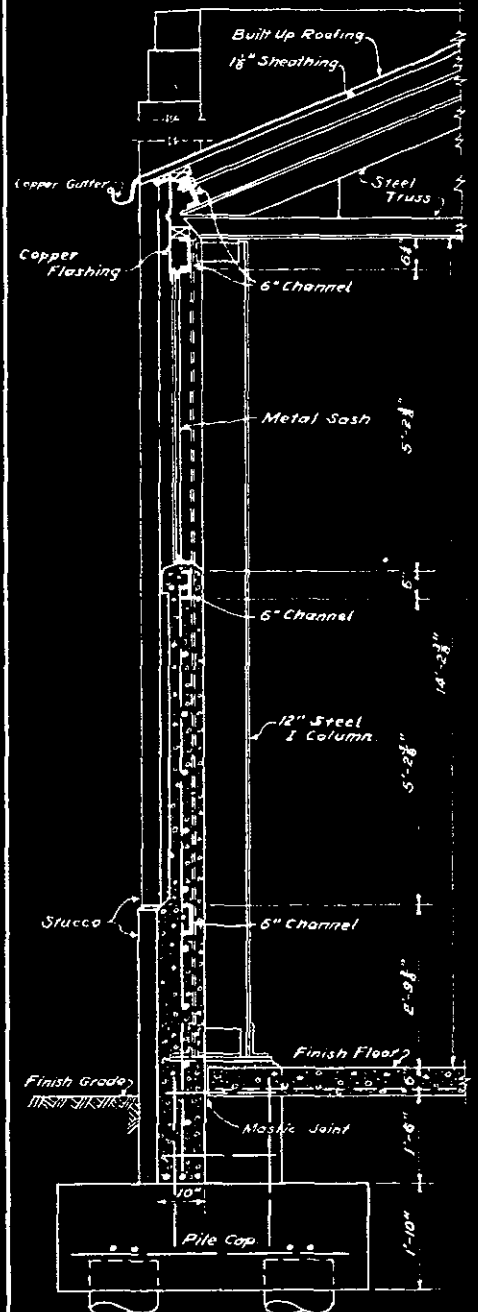
Hamilton Army Air Field is owned by various federal entities including the Department of the Navy, Department of the Army, United States Coast Guard, and General Services Administration. The Army/GSA parcels are being excessed and sold to private developers. The Navy property is included in Base Closure and Realignment actions.

As part of the Army's undertaking, it has been determined in consultation with the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) that the excess sale will have an affect on properties at the air field, and that these properties are components of a district that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Based on consultation with the OHP and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, pursuant to 36 CFR part 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f), a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was entered into by the interested parties in March 1994. The agreement stipulated that prior to excess sale the Army must contact the HABS/HAER division at the Western Regional Office of the National Park Service, San Francisco, California, to determine the appropriate level and kind of recordation for the subject properties. The MOA further stipulated that copies of the documentation be made available to the OHP and

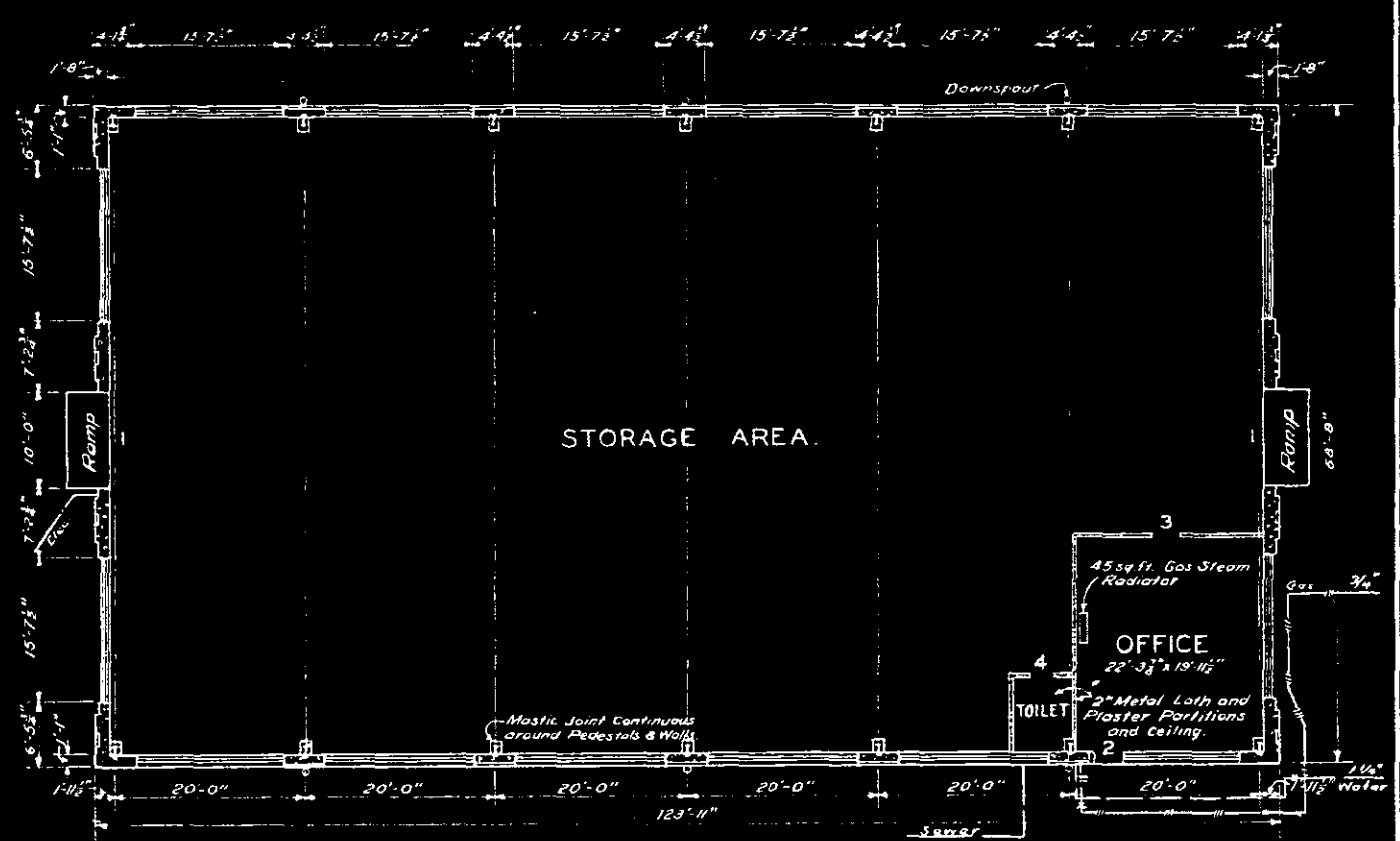
appropriate local archives designated by the OHP. This recordation has been prepared in order to meet those stipulations.

The title page, Part I, and Part III were prepared by Mary L. Maniery, Historian, PAR Environmental Services, Sacramento. Architectural descriptions in Part II were compiled by Judith Marvin, Historian/Architectural Historian, Foothill Resources, Murphys, California. Descriptions were checked against photographs and plans by Mary L. Maniery and were embellished and corrected, as necessary. Information on historic landscape design was extracted by Mary L. Maniery from a report prepared by Dr. Fred Hrusa, Botanist, PAR Environmental Services. Photography was prepared by David DeVries, Mesa Technical, Berkeley, California.


TN
69'
Office
Letrine
Open
Space
124'
Security
Vault



SECTION THRU WALL
SCALE $\frac{3}{8}$" = 1'-0".



FLOOR PLAN
SCALE $\frac{1}{16}$" = 1'-0"

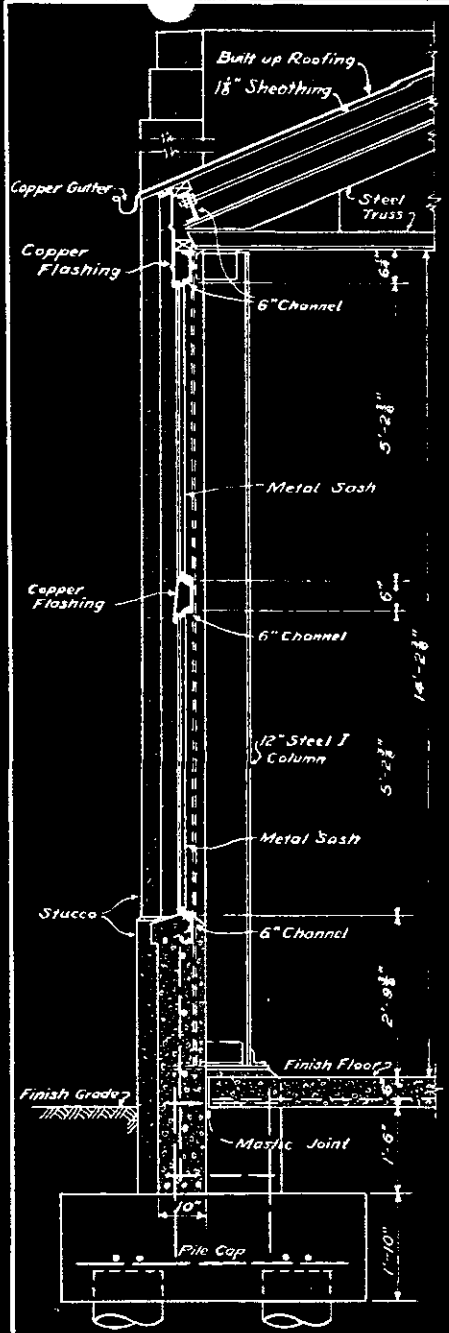
DOORS			
MK.	WIDTH	HEIGHT	DESCRIPTION
1	5'-0"	10'-0"	WOOD PANEL
2	3'-0"	7'-0"	" "
3	2'-8"	7'-0"	" "
4	2'-6"	6'-8"	" "

WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE CONSTRUCTING QUARTERMASTER
HAMILTON FIELD, CALIF.

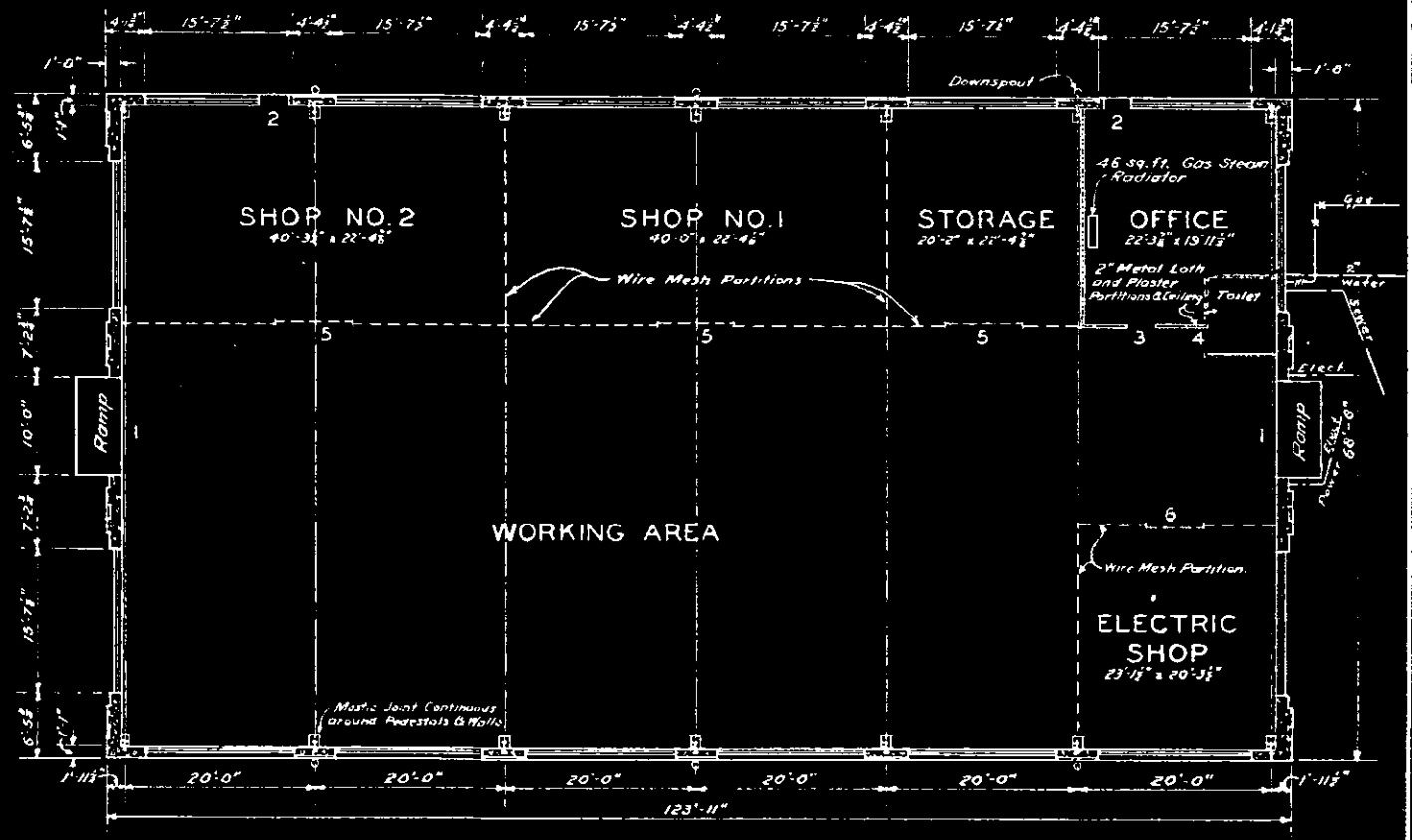
Q.M. SALVAGE WAREHOUSE.

Drawn GLR Traced GLR Checked BEE Date 7-9-34	H.B. NURSE. Capt. Q.M.C. Constructing Quartermaster.	O.D.M.G Plan 6754-300 to 6754-303 inc. Post Plan 373-23-34 Bldg. No. 18

HAMILTON FIELD (Facility Nos. 309, 405)
Warehouse Type C
HABS No. CA-2298-A.1, Page 11



SECTION THRU WALL
SCALE $\frac{3}{8}$" = 1'-0"



FLOOR PLAN
SCALE $\frac{1}{16}$" = 1'-0"

DOORS			
MK.	WIDTH	HEIGHT	DESCRIPTION
1	5'-0"	10'-0"	WOOD PANEL
2	3'-0"	7'-0"	" "
3	2'-8"	7'-0"	" "
4	2'-6"	7'-0"	" "
5	8'-0"	8'-0"	WIRE MESH
6	6' 0"	8' 0"	" "

WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE CONSTRUCTING QUARTERMASTER
HAMILTON FIELD, CALIF.

Q. M. MAINTENANCE BLDG.

Drawn G.L.R.
Traced G.L.R.
Checked B.E.E.
Date 7-6-34

H.B. NURSE.
Capt Q.M.C.
Constructing Quartermaster

Q.M.S. Plan
6754-300 to
6754-303 inc
Post Plan
373-23-34
Bldg. No. 16

HAMILTON FIELD (Facility Nos. 309, 405)
Warehouse Type C
HABS No. CA-2398-AJ Page 12